
The MCA Advisory

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From the Editor

The Board of Medal Collectors convened on a conference call on March 6th. Because Ye Editor is now retired and cannot use the equipment and personnel at his employer, the cost of publishing The MCA Advisory has risen from \$30 per member per year to \$70. It should prove possible to reduce this latter amount somewhat, but the Board recognized the need to make changes in our dues structure. Accordingly, it was voted to raise regular dues for a hard copy of The Advisory, to \$55 per year, while offering an electronic copy at \$25. For those who have paid their 2011 dues, there will be no change until 2012; for those who have not, the \$55/\$25 rate is effective immediately.

This new rate will fund twelve issues of 12 pages or six issues of 24 pages (there is no difference in cost between the two). However, there is a lot of research on medals being done and a lot being considered. Thus, we have fond hopes that we will get right back into a deficit position caused by a cornucopia of compelling articles.

The Board also discussed our meeting on August 18th at 3pm in Chicago. Tony Lopez will talk about some of his magical research techniques; David Alexander will update us on his new book; Ben Weiss will discuss our ever-burgeoning website and Ye Editor will comment on what lies in store from The Advisory. A social hour will follow.

Gary Muhl advises that the talented Alexander Shagin is making progress on a Club medal. A preliminary design will appear in the June issue of The Advisory, whereas actual examples of the medal will be available at our August meeting.

Webmaster's Report (by Ben Weiss)

There is a wealth of information on our MCA website and new material is added regularly, thanks in large measure to all those who so generously provided it to me. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

We have Links to dozens of interesting Medal Collections on the Web, posted online by individuals, organizations and art museums throughout the world. Also there are Links to information on Medal Organizations in this country and in Europe. Also posted is a wide

variety of general information on medal collecting, both for the beginner and more seasoned medal enthusiasts.

We have an extensive General Bibliography, consisting of about two hundred entries, on which is shown the important Books, Journals and Auction Catalogs related to medal collecting. There is also an Annotated Bibliography where we divide the books into specific Topics, Countries and Medallists. As a further guide for the user, we provide commentary on the specific coverage and usefulness of these books.

We also have a News section where we post current events related to medal collecting, including upcoming meetings, talks, events, articles, new books, awards and exhibits (one on "Precious Metals: From Au to Zn", provided by Anne Bentley. Thanks Anne. Another, a display on Goetz Medals by Scott Goodman. Thanks to you too, Scott). Posted recently are new videos showing an extremely interesting, four-part series on THE MEDAL MAKER. These videos were produced by the Medallic Art Company with the script written by Dick Johnson and were originally posted on Wayne Homren's website E-Sylum (thanks for this Wayne). There are videos of individuals (Anne Bentley) presenting seminars on their medal collecting interests. This latter material was generously sent to the webmaster by Donald Scarinci, who also sent a video on "Ode to Medals" and his observations on the FIDEM Conference, which are posted on our website. Thanks so much, Donald.

The Members' Corner has a variety of information related to recent activities of our MCA members, including their collections, talks and publications (e.g., new book on Admiral Vernon Medals by John Adams, Fernando Chao with the collaboration of Anne Bentley).

Our relatively new section on Oral History of Medallic Art has recordings of extensive interviews of prominent members of our community of medal collectors and

scholars, including Dick Johnson, John Adams, Alan Stahl and Eric Newman. This feature provides a permanent record of the history of medal collecting in the words of these eminent individuals. More are to come.

The Archives Section posts pdf files of past issues of the MCA Advisory, our monthly publication, edited by John Adams. Recent and new editions of the MCA Advisory are available only to current members. Thanks to the efforts of Tony Lopez, we are planning to post new editions of the MCA Advisory online. The online current editions of the Advisory will be made available only to members and can be reached through our MCA website.

In short, there is much exciting and useful information to be read, viewed and heard on our MCA website...and there is much more to come.

Please visit us at: www.medalcollectors.org

The Hornsby Medal (by Sim Comfort)

A cast lead medal with traces of suspension at 12 o'clock and engraved around the rim in script: *'His Majesty's Reward to Richd. Hornby (sic) of the Wrightson and Isabell for Bravely defending her with five men & three boys against a French privateer of 70 men and blowing up the privateer June 2 1744.'*

Captain Richard Avery Hornsby, of Sunderland, was sailing to The Hague with a load of barley when he was confronted by the French privateer. It would appear that the Captain's fortunate shot with a double-loaded blunderbuss was the deciding factor in winning the action after which the Marquis of Brancas sank. In September 1744, following a petition by the Admiralty, George II awarded Hornsby a gold medal and chain worth £100 for his bravery, at a ceremony at Kensington Palace. His men each received a bounty of £5, whilst the boys received a mere 40 shillings.' DNW lot 1097, auctioned 15 March 2011. (Ref: Mayo, vol. I, pp 92-93)

The original gold medal was the Royal Family medal of 1732 and depicts King George II and Queen Caroline on the obverse. The reverse contains the busts of seven royal children. The medal was struck by John Croker from dies prepared by John Sigismund Tanner and is only found struck in gold, silver and copper. The medal was produced by order of the King for distribution to foreign Princes and to other persons, whom His Majesty was pleased to honour. (Ref: MI vol. II page 500-501, medal 47.)

As the original gold medal and chain are not known in any collection, I think that Richard Hornsby had a greater need for the one hundred pounds than the medal and chain, which were converted to cash while a jeweller made the cast copy for him to wear on special occasions. Further, as Hornsby wanted the medal to survive and not be stolen or further melted for cash, he chose worthless lead for the casting.

This medal was previously auctioned at Glendining's 21 March 1910, lot 301 and DNW 15 December 2005, lot 1293.

Following is the account of the fight as published in the *London Gazette* of 16 June 1744:

'The following is a Declaration which has been made here [The Hague], by Richard Hornby [sic], Master of the Wrightson and Isabella, of Sunderland, concerning an Engagement he had with a French Privateer, called the Marquis de Brancas, commanded by Jean Andrie, from Dunkirk, on Saturday the 13th of June, N[ew] S[tyle].

'About Four Leagues off Shore, within Sight of the Steeple of Gravesend, at One o'clock, I saw a Privateer two Leagues from us, running to the Southward. As soon as he discovered me, he tack'd and stood directly for me with all the Sail he could make. At Two o'clock he was within Gun-shot, when he hoisted French Colours, and fired upon me with his Chace Guns forward. I immediately hoisted the British Colours, and returned the Shot. At a Quarter past Two he boarded us on the Larboard

Quarter, his Bowsprit within our Main Shrouds, but entered none of his Men. He then back'd a-stern, and run us aboard on the Starboard Side, grappled, lash'd and entered a considerable Number of his Men.

'We gave them a warm Reception from our close Quarters, which they endeavoured to tear up with Axes, firing on us furiously with Small Arms at the same Time; but we ply'd them so smartly with our Small Arms, that we killed several of them, and soon cleared the Deck, the Living carrying away the Dead, in their Arms. After that he lay about forty Minutes lash'd to us calling to us to strike or he would give us no Quarter; We answered, he must come and do that himself if he durst.

'All this Time we were firing at each other briskly with Small Arms, and his Men chopping at our Rigging. He then sheered off, and played upon us with his Guns, Swivels and Small Arms, to which we made him regular Returns from ours. By his Firing, our Masts and Sails were very much shattered, and our Rigging torn to Pieces.

'At Seven o'clock he boarded us again, but none of his Men would enter, so he sheered off, and we took an Opportunity at firing upon his Stern, at about a hundred Yards Distance from us, when he immediately blew up, occasioned, as we imagine, by one of our Shot going amongst his Powder. I saw several of the Men upon the Wreck, some dead, and some alive, and several in the Water, struggling hard and crying for Help, but we could give them none, our Tackles and Runners being shot away, we could hoist no Boat out. We then set what Sails we could, and got a Pilot on board, who lay in Sight of us during the whole Action, and at Night we came to Anchor in the [River] Maase. The Enemy left a Grappling and some of their Small Arms on board us. Two of the Privateers Crew are come up to Rotterdam and say she carried 10 Guns, eight Swivels, and 75 Men. My ship carries four Guns, two Swivels, five Men and three Boys, who all behaved with

uncommon Courage and Bravery, particularly my Mate Jon Vardill.'

Transcribed by Sim Comfort, 16 March 2011



Not in Betts: The American Samoa Medals (by Peter C. Smith)

For medal collectors, a “Betts Medal” is something special. These are listed in *American Colonial History Illustrated by Contemporary Medals* and include items “to commemorate events leading to the independence of the United States in 1776.” Many of these medals commemorate treaties related to the colonization of the Americas.

American Samoa became a possession of the United States following a treaty that is commemorated on medals. These medals are notably missing from Betts. That is because the Treaty was signed too late for Betts in 1889.

The island group was probably inhabited for three thousand years before Western contact. It is likely that the natives learned about foreign ships and sailors through other native contacts in Tonga.

Jacob Roggeveen, sailing for the Dutch West India Company, discovered Easter Island on Easter Sunday, April 5, 1722. From there, with three ships, he continued west and sighted the Samoa Islands on June 13. He made some contact with the native population but did not find safe harbor there and sailed on. He continued west to Java where he was arrested for infringing on territory of the Dutch East India Company.

Louis-Antoine de Bougenville visited the Island group on May 3, 1768. Unaware of Roggeveen’s earlier visit, he thought he had discovered a new group of islands. Comparing the islands negatively to Tahiti, he left without landing.

Jean-Francois de Galoup de Laperouse visited the islands in 1787 and traded with the natives. One of his ships was grounded in a bay at low tide. Some of the natives attacked the sailors with stones and they returned fire from their muskets. It is estimated that twelve Frenchmen were killed and about thirty natives. The area was later named “Massacre bay” and

the islands were declared a dangerous area to visit.

After news of the attack spread, there were few visits to the islands until 1824. John Williams arrived in 1830 and was successful in establishing a Christian mission there.

The harbor at Pago Pago became an attractive location for a coaling station to support travel and trade by steamship. Foreign powers began to push for harbor rights with the U.S. Navy negotiating a treaty in 1872.

In 1887 an insurrection rose against Germany colonial powers with German warships shelling a local village. The United States and Great Britain, who also had interests in the area, protested. A conference in Washington, D.C. in 1887 adjourned with no agreement.

In March of 1889 war clouds gathered over Apia harbor. Three American warships joined three German warships with the British ship HMS Calliope watching. Then on March 15, a cyclone struck. The wooden hulled German and American ships broke from their anchorage, dragged across the reefs and were sunk or grounded. Only the Calliope was able to steam out of the harbor and survive.

Count Herbert Bismarck called for a conference to settle the Samoa dispute. The 1889 Treaty of Berlin established a condominium (joint control) governed by the United States, German and Britain. Silver medals were struck to commemorate the 1889 Samoan Conference and the resulting treaty.



Great Britain. The names of the delegates appear on the medal including Americans George Handy Bates, John Adam Kasson and William Walter Phelps. German delegates included Count Herbert von Bismarck, Baron Friedrich August von Holstein and Dr. Richard Krauel. British delegates included Joseph Archer Crowe and Sir Edward Baldwin Malet. The medal identifies the final British delegate as "Scot." I believe this was Charles Stuart Scott.

Kasson has another connection to American numismatics. He proposed the four dollar gold "Stella" coins struck as patterns in 1879 and 1880.



The larger of the 1889 medals is 38.5 mm in diameter and weighs 27.5 grams. The obverse has the same design as the Prussian 5 Mark coins of 1888 [Y-122] with one exception. The coins have a mintmark "A" under the bust; the medals have a star in the same location. The obverse is not the same exact die as the coin illustrated in the Krause catalog. [*Standard Catalog of World Coins*] Perhaps an expert on German die varieties can match the medal to a specific coin.

The reverse has three shields representing the United States, Prussia, and



The smaller medals are 28.5 mm in diameter and weigh 12 grams. The obverse is the same as the Prussian 2 Mark coins of 1888 [Y-120] with the star below the bust. Again the medal does not match the coin in the Krause catalog.

The reverse has a similar combination of national crests but does not include the listing of delegates.

The 1899 Tripartite Convention partitioned the islands with the western group under German control and the eastern group under American control. Britain was excluded from the area but gained rights over Tonga.

American Samoa came under the jurisdiction of the Navy Department from 1900 until 1951. After 1951 it came under the Department of the Interior. Residents of the islands are American nationals but not American citizens. They have no vote in American elections.

Western Samoa was invaded by New Zealand on August 29, 1914, and they remained in control until the island group became independent in 1962.

The primary industry in American Samoa is canning tuna. In recent years, the industry has been severely hurt by the enforcement of American minimum wages for workers. The islands supply a disproportionate number of American service men and football players for the NFL. Western Samoa, on the other hand, produces and exports rugby players.

George II Indian Peace Medal

The George II Indian peace medal (Betts 396, MI II 498/42) has a number of strikes against it. First, little has been written about it. Second, there are only three or four examples known, all of which are in institutions. Third, the medal is rather rough in appearance, having been cast rather than struck. Edward Hawkins put a sort of curse on it when, writing in Medallic Illustrations he labeled it as “probably

the badge of some Society,” although he did allow that “perhaps it was intended for distribution amongst the chiefs of the American Indians”.

Thus, when a possible new example was announced, it was predictable that it would be greeted with some combination of ennui and skepticism. Moreover, as one can see from the image accompanying, it is not unkind to suspect it of being an after cast or, indeed, an after cast of an after cast.

However, the story has a much happier ending. Tony Terranova, Warren Baker and John Kraljevitch viewed the medal at first hand and all three pronounced it genuine. Further, Bob Hoge at the ANS had been in the process of writing a paper on the George II Indian peace medal; this will be published before year end. The research being done by Bob as well as further research being done by the present owner of the medal will go a long way toward relieving the state of relative ignorance that has existed heretofore. Why was this medal not made on sophisticated equipment at the British Mint? Where indeed was it made? Who made it? And so forth.

Medal collectors can look forward to answers to some of these questions. It is always exciting when our knowledge on a particular subject takes a great leap forward.



27.47 grams - 46.36 mm.



Letters to the Editor

John:

A few days ago I bought on e-Bay what I believe is a Robert Ready British-made 19th century high quality cast copy of the Tuesday Club 1746 Annapolis Maryland medal. It is likely a copy of the British Museum's silver specimen.

Please view e-Bay # 140522290779 and give me your thoughts. Other Robert Ready excellent casts of Maryland silver colonial coins appeared in the Stack's 2009 Americana sale, consigned by the MD Historical Society.

Funny thing is this eBay South Carolina-source specimen was initially posted 2 weeks ago without mentioning any markings on the rim and I was prepared to bid a solid 5 figures on it when it was closing. But I inquired of the seller about the rim, anticipating it to be an electrotype, and the SC seller withdrew it, seeing then what it was. He re-listed it days later as the copy it is.

Are you aware of any other electros or casts of this medal? Who was Robert Ready beyond what the Stack's catalogue related? Did he mark his casts "copy" and what do you think "A" means, which is horizontal on the eBay specimen's rim alongside the perpendicular R? The weight is pretty close to the copper Ford specimen's weight.

Tony T. bought Ford's and still has it unsold. He'd paid \$40K plus 15% for the copper which is approx what the = condition Lou LaRiviere silver sold for!

Alan Weinberg

Re: Pewter Disease

Hello John,

Comfort is making progress on understanding the Boulton Trafalgar medal.

I've identified a difference between the presentation medals that Boulton made and the general issue of the pewter medal to the fleet.

Also identified two distinct reverse die varieties.

Attached is an image of presentation pewter and a general issue pewter.

You'll see the telltale lump at eleven o'clock on the reverse die of the presentation medal.

I'm working with both David Vice and Philip Attwood and I have an idea that neither can further, but hoping that you might know someone who may have an opinion or information.

The key differences between the presentation pewter and the general issue pewter medals are:

- Lump at 11 o'clock.
- Always with mirror fields and frosted devices.
- Never seen with the pewter disease.
- Very slightly heavier, e.g. BM presentation pewter is 41.66 g where general issue is typically about 1 g less in weight.

I'm wondering if Boulton could have changed the alloy for the presentation pewter in order to protect it from the pewter disease.

If so, what could that change have been?

Probably best that this doesn't go into the Advisory as Sim is still wandering around in the dark looking for answers!

All will be revealed in his next book which details Boulton's naval medals.

Best regards,

Sim (Comfort)

Good morning, Sim - It sounds like a bell ringer of an article! RE: tin pest, the Dutch used a copper plug. I would guess that Boulton just added a little Cu, but probably enough to detect by a specific gravity test. If need be, I can perform the latter. Let me know (and good luck).

Best, John

Re: Admiral Rodney Medal

Hi John,

I was re-reading through the March 2010 MCA Advisory and wanted to send you a

picture of the medal I purchased a month or so ago. It is the same size 35.2 - 35.3mm and the weight is 22.2 gms. It appears to me to be silver and struck, although I could be incorrect. I believe it is very rare in silver, maybe unique. I have as of late been on a Rodney kick.

Best,

Skyler Leichty



commission (by Tony Lopez)

